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E.O. 12958: DECL: 2020/02/17
TAGS: [PINR](#) [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [MX](#)
SUBJECT: DHS SECRETARY NAPOLITANO'S MEETING WITH PRESIDENT CALDERON,
FEBRUARY 17

REF: 09 MEXICO 3573; 10 TIJUANA 35; 10 MEXICO 518

CLASSIFIED BY: Gustavo Delgado, Minister Counselor, DOS, POL; REASON:
1.4(B), (D)

¶1. (C) Summary. Secretary for Homeland Security Janet Napolitano met with President Felipe Calderon on February 17 for over an hour-long discussion that ranged in topic from aviation security issues to counternarcotics cooperation. The bulk of the discussion focused on the GOM's plans for Ciudad Juarez and the need for U.S. assistance in trying to combat organized crime and lower violence in the city. There is a new opportunity in Juarez to mobilize civil society to make progress in dealing with the city's security woes. President Calderon underscored that every measure be taken to re-establish authority in Juarez and reclaim public spaces, and engage communities to combat violence. He thanked the U.S. for its support on developing the Juarez plan and asked for continued engagement to share intelligence and operational advice. End Summary.

¶2. (C) The discussion opened with aviation security issues. Secretary Napolitano conveyed her appreciation for Mexico's coordination of a regional conference on aviation security, and said that the Christmas day events in Detroit must be used to increase global standards. Once terrorists enter international air networks, they can move anywhere. Thus, we must build the capacity of all countries. The International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) must help build capacity and raise standards, particularly in the weakest nations. President Calderon said that there is no alternative but to push for global cooperation and to increase Latin America's capacity. Iran, he noted, is focusing on places like Venezuela to establish operations. Bolivia and Ecuador are also vulnerable. Calderon is also concerned that organized criminal groups may try to establish contacts with terrorists. He cited the nexus between the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) and organized crime in Colombia as an example. Secretary Napolitano responded that, although we have not seen evidence to this effect, the potential is there, and this is all the more reason to share information on passengers and screening technology, as well as assist countries in their efforts to upgrade. Calderon also noted that the Mexican Army (SEDENA) and Air Force are looking for three dimensional radars to better detect illicit air traffic.

¶3. (C) Most of the rest of the discussion focused on the status of Mexico's counternarcotics fight, the way ahead in Ciudad Juarez, and how the United States can support these efforts. In response

to Secretary Napolitano's question on the status of Mexico's battle against the cartels, Calderon noted that Mexico in the past several months has seen positive results, including the December takedown of Arturo Beltran Leyva in Cuernavaca (ref a) and the January arrest of Diego Teodoro Garcia Simental ("El Teo") in Tijuana (ref b). He said that Mexico's capacity for joint interagency operations is improving, but that there are still some problems with execution. Calderon highlighted the Mexican Navy (SEMAR) in particular as more aptly handling intelligence, but also said that the Public Security Secretariat's (SSP) Federal Police and SEDENA are making progress. The President said that with U.S. support, Mexican security services are obtaining more effective access to counternarcotics targets.

¶4. (C) Calderon focused attention on the violence problem in Ciudad Juarez. He said that Mexico finds itself in a critical moment following the January 31 Salvarcar massacre of fifteen youths (ref c). This is an opportunity, he continued, to mobilize civil society and for the GOM to respond to public pressure that something be done in the city. Mexico needs the right USG counterparts, and Calderon asked whether the El Paso Intelligence Center (EPIC) might fill that role. Secretary Napolitano responded that EPIC can help to identify the right organized crime targets, but that Mexico must move beyond military deployments and establish a police capacity in Ciudad Juarez capable of policing every block and street. Social services and rule of law must also be extended

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throughout the city. Secretary Napolitano promised that the USG will assist in any way we can. Ciudad Juarez's struggles with violence have become emblematic of the challenge confronting Mexico and the menace of organized crime.

¶5. (C) President Calderon embarked on a discussion of the historical and societal factors that led to Ciudad Juarez's record levels of violence - up to 40 percent of Mexico's capital crime occurs in Juarez or Chihuahua. Among these key factors, Calderon said Juarez's position as a primary border crossing and rapid growth have contributed to the crime quandary. The societal fabric is weak. Tens of thousands of families moved to Juarez from all over Mexico. Many of these new families were headed by single mothers with unsupervised children who turned to drug consumption and crime rather than school. Juarez's transition from a city on a critical trafficking route to also being a main consumption center has contributed to the growth in other crimes, including extortion and kidnapping. Additionally, Calderon observed that up until about three years ago, the Juarez cartel controlled the city. More recently, the Sinaloa cartel has moved in to try to claim the territory, which has pitted the two organizations against each other and caused them to recruit gangs to fight their battles. A comprehensive solution to the violence problem is complex, Calderon said, and has to address the city's social ills, economic development, health services, and the corrupt police and court system. The President exhorted that Mexico and the United States work together.

¶6. (C) Secretary Napolitano said that Ciudad Juarez's proximity to the United States has drawn U.S. attention to the violence problem and underscored the need to establish the rule of law and a real civilian police presence. As the United States learned with New York and Los Angeles, a visible police presence assigned to specific areas is key, and people must be arrested for even minor offenses to get criminals off the streets. Calderon noted that Ciudad Juarez - with assistance - is in the process of renewing the municipal police, and indicated that he favors the "Bratton approach" to the city (Note: New York Transit Police Chief William Bratton in the early 1990s applied a "zero tolerance" anti-crime strategy based on the "Broken Windows" theory, which proposes that attention to and a reduction in low-level crime will also help prevent major crime). Calderon said the government must establish

real enforcement of the law and a sense of authority in Juarez. The government cannot, as some advocate, make concessions on more minor crimes, like illegal vehicles, to focus only on the major issues.

¶7. (C) Calderon said Operation Joint Chihuahua only temporarily reduced crime after the new troop and Federal Police deployment in March 2009, but then crime exploded as kids fought each other on the street to control the drug trade. Now, the GOM is making important policy decisions. It has augmented the Federal Police in Juarez and has given the SSP primary responsibility for security in the city. The President underscored the continued need for an Army presence, but noted that its role has shifted to mostly patrolling the outskirts. Mexico needs to focus on building civilian institutions, as well as developing a more robust intelligence capacity. The GOM is launching a program to reclaim public spaces like parks and soccer fields.

¶8. (C) Secretary Napolitano and Ambassador Pascual reviewed the strong U.S. commitment to provide support. Representatives from EPIC have been going daily to the Federal Police command and control center to assess mechanisms to transmit operational intelligence. A comprehensive planning session in El Paso the week of February 22 will test every aspect of the GOM plan. The U.S. will produce a complementary plan to provide support, including ties to U.S. law enforcement agencies across the border. We will also look at secure communications, training and vetting for municipal police, building prosecutable cases, and planning support

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for a comprehensive GOM socioeconomic revitalization program.

¶9. (C) The discussion then focused on Mexico's southern border. President Calderon said the USG can help as Mexico intensifies its Southern Border Strategy. Secretary Napolitano noted that the Guatemalan border's dense vegetation and terrain make patrolling difficult and asked whether there are areas to the north in which Mexico can create a choke point for inspections. Calderon indicated that this, indeed, is how they are working, and Secretary of Government Fernando Gomez Mont said that checkpoints are being used at Mexico's more narrow isthmus. USG and GOM officials noted the entrance of Somalis, Eritreans, and even Iranians through the southern border. Calderon underscored that the use of technology - including non-intrusive inspections of vehicles and radars - are necessary for border control. He does not want to continually employ the Army and other forces in such pursuits in fear that they will be corrupted. Mexico's Secretary of Foreign Relations, Patricia Espinosa, said that Guatemala is open to regional security cooperation, but the Guatemalan government itself acknowledged that its team is fragile. Calderon suggested that vetting and checkpoints in Guatemala would be a start, and indicated his concern about criminals smuggling people from Guatemala to the northern border. These smugglers extort migrants with relatives in the United States, and kill those who do not.

¶10. (C) The meeting concluded with a final discussion of Juarez and cooperation on the capture of high-value counternarcotics targets. Calderon asked for advice on police professionalization, and help with all aspects of Juarez's municipal police apparatus. Secretary Napolitano said that Juarez can still be economically competitive. Its border location is a huge and unique asset. But security is a major factor affecting investment. The federal and municipal police must become effective first responders to public safety concerns. Both the U.S. and Mexico have a shared interest, and we committed to work effectively and rapidly to curb the violence in Juarez and assert the state's authority to sustain the rule of law.
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